XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS - "Portals of War"

@dp3894 on X

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Inspired by Xena Warrior Princess and Sliders

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COLD OPEN

EXT. ANCIENT GREECE - FOREST CLEARING - DAY

A sunlit clearing pulses with anachronistic energy, Ancient Greece infused with a 1990s vibe—swords and spears clash with a modern edge.

A swirling VORTEX rips open the sky, spitting out QUINN MALLORY (20s, scrappy scientist), PROFESSOR MAXIMILIAN ARTURO (50s, scholarly but tough), WADE WELLES (20s, determined), and REMBRANDT BROWN (30s, soulful singer). They hit the ground hard, scrambling up.

QUINN
(checking the TIMER)
Forty-two hours till the next slide. Where are we?

They pass a battle damaged Greek chariot, recent construction. Broken wheels, sword marks fresh.

ARTURO
(studying chariot)
Ancient Greece, but... the flow of time feels wrong. Too modern.

WADE
(skeptical)
Modern? They’re still swinging swords, Professor.

QUINN
Timer glitch dumped us on the wrong side of the world. Hope we can get back.

REMBRANDT
Guess there's no burger joints here. Didn't get much to eat on the last world.

ARTURO
Sorry, Mr. Brown. Aside from the basic fruits and vegetables, the local cuisine will be primitive consisting of bread, olives and cheeses. Meat is a luxury. We'll have to find a tavern.

QUINN
At least we have gold from a couple of slides ago. We won't starve.

WADE
What I wouldn't give for a pizza right now.

REMBRANDT
(pointing, urgent)
Yo, heads up!

A dozen MARAUDERS charge from the trees, led by a snarling MARAUDER CAPTAIN, swords gleaming.

MARAUDER CAPTAIN
Fresh meat for Ares' battle! Get 'em!

Quinn shoves the timer into Wade's hands.

QUINN
Wade, guard the timer! We got this.

The Sliders brace—Quinn fists up, Arturo crouching, Rembrandt ready. The marauders close in.

Suddenly, XENA's WAR CRY pierces the air.

XENA, Warrior Princess, SOMERSAULTS from a hilltop, landing between the Sliders and marauders, chakram flashing, sword drawn.

MARAUDER CAPTAIN
(eyes wide)
It's Xena! Get her!

The marauders pivot.

GABRIELLE sprints from the woods, staff spinning.

JOXER stumbles behind, sword flailing comically.

GABRIELLE
(to Xena)
Thought you could
have all the fun?

XENA
It wouldn't be
without you.

Gabrielle smiles.

Marauders swarm their position.

Xena’s chakram WHIRS, slicing a marauder’s sword in half. She spins, kicking two foes into a heap.

Gabrielle’s staff CRACKS a marauder’s jaw, dropping him.

Joxer swings, misses, and accidentally spins into two marauders, knocking them out with a CLONK.

JOXER
(grinning)
Did I do that?

Quinn ducks a blade, punching a marauder.

Arturo shoves another into a tree.

Rembrandt’s kick sends a foe sprawling.

The fight is a whirlwind—Xena’s chakram ricochets, felling three more.

In moments, the marauders lie defeated.

A FLASH OF LIGHT erupts. ARES, God of War, materializes beside Wade, armor glinting.

ARES
(to Xena, smirking)
Xena, you’ve ruined
my little skirmish.
Again.

His eyes lock on the timer in Wade's hand.

ARES (CONT'D)
Portal technology...
fascinating.

He approaches. Wade steps back.

XENA
(steely)
Ares, leave her alone.

ARES
(pointedly)
From now on Xena,
stay out of my business.

With a snap, Ares and Wade vanish in a FLASH. The Sliders shout.

QUINN/ARTURO/REMBRANDT
No!

Xena grips her sword, eyes blazing, as the camera rockets skyward.

CUE XENA THEME AND CREDITS

The iconic theme blares, with Xena’s battles and chakram soaring.

FADE OUT.

ACT ONE

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

XENA leads ARGO, GABRIELLE at her side, staff ready. JOXER hums off-key, trailing.

QUINN, ARTURO, and REMBRANDT, in 1990s gear, march with purpose, the loss of Wade fueling their steps.

XENA
(eyeing their clothes)
Your clothes are strange.
What land are you from?

Quinn glances to Arturo who nods the affirmative.

QUINN
Not a land exactly.
That device Wade had
—it's a timer. Opens
gateways to other worlds.
Parallel dimensions.

GABRIELLE
(awed)
Like a god?

ARTURO
(chuckling)
Science. In your world,
alchemy.

XENA
(nodding)
That explains why Ares
wants it.

REMBRANDT
Who's this Ares joker
anyways?

JOXER
(puffing up)
The God of War! He helps or hinders warriors like me —Joxer the Mighty.
(hums)
Joxer the Mighty, he roams through the countryside...

He trails off under their amused glances.

ARTURO
Apparently the Greek gods are real in this world. Quantum theory postulates some universes have their own laws of physics. Quite the paradigm shift.

QUINN
(grim)
That doesn't get Wade or the timer back.
(to Xena)
Will Ares hurt Wade?

XENA
Not likely if she has useful information. Your friend's at his temple, two days' walk, in a warlord's compound.
(to Quinn, Rembrandt, Arturo)
Any of you have battle experience?

REMBRANDT
I served in the Navy. Seen some action.

QUINN
The Professor and I are scientists, but we've scrapped on other worlds.

ARTURO
We've handled ourselves quite well in our travels.

GABRIELLE
(smirking)
Guess, that'll have to do.

Xena eyes the Sun's position.

XENA
We got a few hours until sunset. We'll take the back roads, avoid villages.
(to Quinn, Arturo, Rembrandt)
Your presence could draw unwanted attention. Let's move.

They march on, the road winding, snaking through hills.

INT. ARES' TEMPLE - MAIN CHAMBER - NIGHT

Torchlight dances on warlike carvings. ARES faces the LOCAL WARLORD.

ARES
Reinforce the emplacements. Xena's coming.

LOCAL WARLORD
Yes, Lord Ares.

He exits. Ares turns to WADE, trapped behind a MAGICAL FORCE FIELD, her 1990s clothes clashing with the ancient stone. His dark eyes lock onto hers, voice a low rumble.

ARES
(smirking, tracing her with his gaze)
Those clothes hide too much fire.

He waves, transforming her outfit into a flowing GREEK DRESS that clings softly, sneakers to strappy sandals.

ARES (CONT'D)
(wicked grin)
Now you look like a warrior queen.

He studies the TIMER.

ARES (CONT'D)
Similar to Atlantis tech, long dead. Seen in psychics' orbs—tales of me and Xena.
(leaning closer, curious)
How long have women like you defied gods, slipping worlds?

WADE
(firm, holding his gaze)
I'm just along for the ride. Let me go.

Ares lowers the field, stepping close, his presence a seductive storm.

ARES
(husky)
I could glimpse that fire in you... if you let me.

He brushes her cheek, GOD-LIKE ENERGY sparking like warm lightning. Wade’s eyes flutter, defiance warring with a rush of attraction.

WADE
(shaken)
What are you doing?

He gestures; a wall turns MIRROR-LIKE, showing her past slides—worlds, dangers, her strength.

ARES
(dark smile, hint of admiration)
Your journey’s more intoxicating than any battle. I want more.

The mirror flickers as Wade glares, pulse quickening, defiance laced with reluctant allure.

Image of QUINN fixing the timer ripples in the mirror.

Ares subtly realizes his next move.

EXT. FOREST CAMPSITE - NIGHT

The campfire crackles. XENA sharpens her sword.

ARGO munching grass in the moonlight.

GABRIELLE stirs vegetables in a pot over the fire.

JOXER hums, sees the pot contents, licks his lips, reaches out.

Gabrielle SLAPS his hand away.

JOXER
Ow!

GABRIELLE
This is for our guests Joxer. You'll get yours later.

Joxer mimicks quietly, mocking.

QUINN, ARTURO, and REMBRANDT sit, tense.

Gabrielle ladels soup in birchbark bowls, hands them out.

ARTURO
Thank you, my dear.

Rembrandt nods, takes a sip.

REMBRANDT
Not bad.

GABRIELLE
(to Xena)
See? Somebody likes my cooking.

Xena smirks, annoyed.

GABRIELLE (CONT'D)
(hands bowl to Quinn)
So how long have you been traveling?

QUINN
For a while. One time we thought we were home but it wasn't. Different worlds, different people. Sometimes other versions of ourselves.

GABRIELLE
I left my village to find purpose. You'll find home.

XENA
(to Quinn)
Sounds like you've had adventures.

QUINN
Or nightmares. Never know what awaits us.

GABRIELLE
Are there still battles on your world?

QUINN
It comes and goes. Depends on the whims of corrupt politicians and elites. Same story, fancier toys.

XENA
Just like here. Did technology make your world better?

ARTURO
Tech's a double-edged sword, like your chakram, Xena. Good—medicine, convenience. Evil—war, death.

Xena's face twinges with guilt, her warlord past flashing.

XENA
What inspired it?

ARTURO
Greek philosophers
—Plato, Aristotle
—and mathematicians
—Pythagoras, Archimedes
—sparked science, birthing our tech.

JOXER
(perks up)
Forget that. Is the music better?

REMBRANDT
(smiling)
Depends on what's popular. Heard you singing, Joxer. I can help. They called me the Cryin' Man.

GABRIELLE
(teasing)
Cryin' Man and Joxer? Some duo.

The group chuckles, tension easing. Even Xena cracks a smile.

QUINN
(standing, stretching)
Nature's calling. Back soon.

REMBRANDT
Don't fall in, Q-Ball.

Quinn smirks, steps into the woods.

EXT. WOODS - MOMENTS LATER

Quinn reaches a secluded spot. A FLASH OF LIGHT, and ARES appears.

ARES
(slyly)
Number two can wait.
You're number one on
my list.

Ares snaps, and they vanish in a FLASH.

EXT. FOREST CAMPSITE/WOODS - MOMENTS LATER

Xena spots the flash, leaping up, chakram ready.

The group races into the woods, urgency spiking.

Xena reaches the secluded spot, glances around, holding the chakram.

XENA
(grim)
Ares.

FADE OUT.

ACT TWO

INT. ARES' TEMPLE - DUNGEON CELL - MORNING

QUINN wakes in a dank, torchlit cell, chains rattling. He scans the shadows, voice tight.

QUINN
Wade? Anyone?

A FLASH, and ARES appears, leaning against the cell wall, his smirk sharp, eyes glinting with predatory charm.

QUINN (CONT'D)
(steely)
Where's Wade?

ARES
(teasing, voice
a low rumble)
Safe. More than safe
—she's a fire I couldn't
resist... exploring.

He raises an eyebrow, provocative.

Quinn's jaw tightens, fury flashing. He lunges, chains straining.

QUINN
You son of a b—

Ares flicks a hand; an ENERGY ZAP hurls Quinn to the stone floor, breath knocked out.

ARES
(smirking)
Her mind, mortal. Your
little sliding adventures
—Arturo's equations,
Rembrandt's tunes. All
in here.

He taps his temple, stepping closer, looming.

QUINN
(wincing, defiant)
She’s stronger than you think. You’ll get nothing from me.

ARES
(eyes narrowing, amused)
When Xena storms in, your warrior spirit will sing. And I’ll drink every secret.

Quinn glares, his loyalty to Wade burning through the pain.

QUINN
(quiet, fierce)
You’ll never break her. Or us.

Ares chuckles, a dark promise in his gaze, then vanishes in a flash.

Quinn stares into the void, resolve hardening.

EXT. - COUNTRYSIDE - MONTAGE - DAY

Blazing hot Sun beats down.

XENA leads ARGO while GABRIELLE, JOXER, ARTURO and REMBRANDT travel with her on deserted roads. Xena subtly eyes distant hills for threats.

They stop at a waterfall. Argo drinks from pool. Rembrandt wipes water on his face.

Joxer eats an apple, tosses piece of skin at Gabrielle. She playfully headslaps him.

Arturo expressively tells Xena tales of their slide travels.

Xena and Gabrielle walk slightly ahead, Argo's reins in Xena's hand. Gabrielle glances at Xena, her face softening with concern.

GABRIELLE
(quiet, earnest)
Xena, you're carrying this fight like it's yours alone. We're in this together, you know—me, you, even these strangers.

XENA
(eyes forward, faint smile)
You always remind me what's worth fighting for, Gabrielle. Their hope... it's like yours.

GABRIELLE
(small smile, touching Xena's arm)
Then let's get them home. For both our sakes.

They share a look, a silent bond of trust.

Xena sees movement in the distance, quickly grabs Chakram, then relaxes.

A lone villager on a hill gathers firewood, ignores them.

In the background, Joxer animatedly recounts a "heroic" tale to Rembrandt and Arturo, waving his arms, nearly tripping. Rembrandt chuckles, Arturo shakes his head, amused.

Xena fascinated, taking a liking to Arturo.

On the distant hill, the villager slowly turns around, transforms into ARES, watching.

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - EVENING

Setting sunlight radiates through the trees.

GABRIELLE practices staff spins, fluid and fierce.

XENA and ARTURO spar with sticks

ARTURO
I've faced worse than
you in lecture halls.

XENA
We'll see about that.

Xena swipes, Arturo dodges. He lands a deft poke.

GABRIELLE
(amazed)
You're full of surprises,
Professor.

XENA
(to Arturo,
impressed)
Are you sure you're
not a warrior?

REMBRANDT
(O.S.)
Never pegged you for
a swashbuckler, Professor!

ARTURO
(proud)
I served in the British
Army in my youth. Learned
a thing or two about
hand-to-hand combat.

XENA
Soldiers can make the
best fighters...
(subtle flirt)
and lovers.

ARTURO
(intrigued)
Indeed.

XENA
(nods)
We hit Ares' temple tomorrow.

Arturo looks at his watch.

GABRIELLE
What is that, some type of talisman?

ARTURO
It's called a watch. It's how we tell time in our world. Fifteen hours till we slide. We can't miss it.

GABRIELLE
And if you do?

ARTURO
Then my dear, we're stuck here for twenty nine years.

XENA
Then we better pick up the pace. Again.

Arturo and Xena continue sparring.

REMBRANDT coaches JOXER's singing, hitting a soulful note.

REMBRANDT
Hit it clean, Joxer.

Joxer's off-key wail makes Rembrandt wince.

JOXER
How was that?

REMBRANDT
(cringe)
Cat in a blender, man. Try again.

Joxer's second attempt is worse. Grabs his throat, sticks out his tongue in pain.

Rembrandt shakes his head.

XENA
Enough goofing around.
Rembrandt, you’re up.

REMBRANDT
(approaching)
Here comes Cryin' Man
of Monte Cristo.

REMBRANDT spars with Xena, dodging her strikes with flair.

ARTURO bows out.

ARTURO
By all means, Mr. Brown.

INT. ARES' TEMPLE - MAIN CHAMBER - NIGHT

WADE tests a SWORD's weight among artifacts, its gleam catching her eye.

ARES (O.S.)
(voice a velvet growl)
That blade could be
yours... if you stay.

Wade spins, startled. ARES leans against a pillar, smirking, his dark gaze pinning her.

WADE
(firm, gripping
the sword)
I'm going home
with my friends.

ARES
(teasing, stepping closer)
Those misfits? An old
professor lost in numbers,
a faded crooner, a techie
who dragged you here?
You deserve more, Wade.

WADE
(defiant, chin up)
They're my family.

Ares closes the distance, his presence a seductive storm, eyes flickering with curiosity.

ARES
(husky)
Imagine a world where
every desire burns true.

He waves, and the room dissolves into blinding white light...

EXT. CASTLE BALCONY - FANTASY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Wade, radiant in a QUEEN'S GOWN, a regal crown glinting, gazes over millions cheering, flowers raining at her feet.

SOLDIERS stand at attention, their shout a thunderclap.

SOLDIERS
All Hail Our Queen!

Ares stands close, his breath warm at her ear, tempting yet reverent.

ARES
Millions will worship you.
Every eye will see the fire
I see now.

He takes her hand, his lips brushing her knuckles with a spark of GOD-LIKE ENERGY. Wade's breath catches, torn between defiance and allure.

Dissolve to...

INT. THRONE ROOM - FANTASY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Queen Wade sits on a golden throne, subjects bowing low. Ares kneels beside her, his hand resting lightly on the throne's arm, eyes locked on hers.

ARES
(smirking, voice low)
Armies will bleed for you, Wade. Name your kingdom, and it's yours.

Dissolve to...

INT. ARES' TEMPLE - DUNGEON CELL - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Quinn uses a METAL HANDLE from a broken bucket, picking the cell lock. It CLICKS open. Chains lay on the floor behind him

He creeps out, ambushing a GUARD with a clasped-hand blow to the neck, stealing his SWORD.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - FANTASY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Swords clash, catapults roar, flaming arrows streak across a chaotic battlefield. Ares stands behind Wade, his hands grazing her shoulders, touch igniting a shiver.

ARES
(whispering, intense)
Realms will kneel to your strength. Rule with me, and every world is ours.

The sky fills with thousands of alternate Earths.

Wade sways, her eyes fluttering, caught in his seductive pull yet fighting to hold her ground. The scene dissolves back to...

INT. ARES' TEMPLE - MAIN CHAMBER - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

WADE, eyes blazing, pulls back from Ares, grips the SWORD tightly, points it at him.

WADE
(fierce)
I'm not your toy.
Back off.

Ares steps closer, his smirk wicked, dark eyes glinting with admiration.

ARES
That fire... it rivals hers.

Wade jabs at Ares, smirks, defiant.

WADE (CONT'D)
You're all talk, Ares. Even a god can't buy loyalty with pretty pictures.

Ares' smirk falters, eyes flashing with irritation, then he recovers with a cold grin, closes in.

Wade desperately swings; the sword slices through air, Ares untouched, his grin widening.

ARES
(teasing)
Stay, and your friends go free. Refuse, and I shatter that timer—your 'family' rots in Tartarus.

QUINN bursts through a doorway, sword raised, his face set with protective fury.

QUINN
Get away from her, you smug bastard.

WADE
(alarmed, but touched)
Quinn?

ARES
(annoyed)
Security's pathetic here. Heads will roll.

Quinn charges, blade flashing. Ares spreads his arms, taunting.

ARES (CONT'D)
(smirking)
Swing away, portal boy.

WADE
Quinn, stop!

Ares dodges with fluid grace, chuckling. Quinn, enraged, swings wildly.

Ares thrusts a hand forward—TELEKINESIS slams Quinn onto an ALTAR SLAB, a FORCE FIELD pinning him. His sword CLATTERS across the floor.

Ares looms, voice a low growl.

ARES
By dawn, your secrets are mine.

He vanishes in a flash of light.

Wade rushes to Quinn, kneeling, her hand brushing his face, eyes soft with worry.

QUINN
(quiet, ashamed)
Lost my cool... he’s like the bully who stole my lunch money as a kid.

WADE
(steady, warm)
The Professor, Rembrandt, Xena—they’ll come. We’ll get out. Together.

Quinn meets her gaze, their bond electric, unspoken loyalty anchoring them.

FADE OUT.

ACT THREE

EXT. ARES' TEMPLE COMPOUND - DAWN

The temple looms in twilight. GUARDS and MARAUDERS patrol.

EXT. NEARBY WOODS - EMBANKMENT

XENA and GABRIELLE scout from an embankment studying the emplacements. A huge trebuchet/catapult device in the main compound.

They WHISPER.

XENA
Amateurs. Emplacements weak. Defenses scattered. Incompetent leadership.

GABRIELLE
Could be a trap.

XENA
Perhaps. How many do you count?

GABRIELLE
Thirty, maybe forty.

They slip down the backside of the embankment, joining ARTURO, REMBRANDT, and JOXER.

XENA
Professor, Gabrielle —south wall, take the archer and guards. Rembrandt, Joxer—north wall. Then flank east, meet at the center. I'll handle the main compound.

ARTURO
The classic pincer movement.

XENA
Your pincer move better work.

ARTURO
It's geometry, my dear; flawless. Once inside we'll free Ms. Welles and Mr. Mallory.

REMBRANDT
How long 'til we slide?

ARTURO
(checks watch)
Twenty minutes.

REMBRANDT
Once we're in there, how do we deal with Ares' freaky god powers?

XENA
(confident)
I'll deal with Ares.

JOXER
(to Rembrandt, excited)
Cryin' Man and Joxer! Songs will be sung!

REMBRANDT
(smiling, cringing)
Not a funeral dirge, I hope.

They split off, stealthy.

EXT. ARES' TEMPLE COMPOUND - SOUTH WALL

GABRIELLE clamps a hand over an ARCHER's mouth, pulling him into foliage. Punches THUD off-screen.

EXT. ARES' TEMPLE COMPOUND - NORTH WALL

REMBRANDT punches an ARCHER, who collapses into bushes.

EXT. ARES' TEMPLE COMPOUND - MAIN COURTYARD

XENA somersaults off the gate, WAR CRY ringing.

Guards turn, rushing her position.

Battle ensues.

Xena fights TWENTY GUARDS, her sword a silver blur, parrying and striking in a deadly dance.

INT. ARES' TEMPLE - MAIN CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

ARES lounges on his throne. Twirls sword, bored.

QUINN and WADE, restrained on the altar and in a corner, respectively, stir awake. The distant sounds of combat filter in. Ares' eyes light up.

ARES
(smirking)
Showtime.

The LOCAL WARLORD bursts in, frantic.

LOCAL WARLORD
Lord Ares, it's Xena!

ARES
(rolling his eyes)
No kidding, you idiot.
Get out there and keep
her busy.

LOCAL WARLORD
Yes, my Lord!

He sprints out. Ares rises, strolls to the altar where the TIMER rests, his gaze locks onto Quinn, still pinned by the magical force field.

ARES
(points to timer)
Once I figure this out,
I'll have no need for
you anymore.

WADE
(desperate)
No! Don't hurt him!

Ares flicks his wrist, TELEKINESIS lifts Wade from the corner, floats her to his throne. ENERGY bands snap around her arms and legs, restraining.

QUINN
(struggling)
Wade!

Ares raises open hand toward Quinn's forehead.

ARES
Enjoy the show,
portal boy.

QUINN
Go to hell!

ARES
(light chuckle)
Tartarus, actually. My
uncle Hades runs the
place. I'll put in a
word for you.

Purple ENERGY pulses from Ares' right hand. Quinn writhes, shakes.

Ares' other hand forms a shimmering PROJECTION on a nearby wall—flashes of Quinn's memories flicker.

Wade watches, tears streaming down her face.

WADE
(crying)
No!

The projection intensifies. Sounds of battle outside grow louder, the clash of steel and Xena's war cry echo faintly.

EXT. ARES' TEMPLE COMPOUND - SOUTH WALL

GABRIELLE and ARTURO battle THREE GUARDS.

Arturo parries a sword, kicking a guard's gut, sending him headfirst into a wall, out cold.

Gabrielle's staff WHIRLS, cracking one guard's skull, sweeping another's legs, dropping both.

GABRIELLE
Nice kick.

ARTURO
Praise later. Move!

EXT. ARES' TEMPLE COMPOUND - NORTH WALL

REMBRANDT and JOXER fight TWO GUARDS.

Rembrandt parries with flair and dodges swings.

REMBRANDT
(to guard)
That's the best you
can do?

GUARD #1
I'll serve your head to
Ares! On a plate!

Rembrandt ducks, sword just missing. He uppercuts. Left fist meets guard's glass jaw. Total knock out.

REMBRANDT
Yeah. Let's see Mike
Tyson top that.

Joxer swings at the other guard, misses.

The guard prepares a swipe.

REMBRANDT (CONT'D)
(to Joxer)
Dodge the swing like
I showed you!

Joxer ducks, stumbles and falls onto a PLANK, launching a BUCKET OF TOOLS that smacks the guard's head. He drops, out cold.

JOXER
Joxer the Mighty
strikes!

REMBRANDT
By accident.

Joxer sticks out his tongue out at the unconscious guard.

JOXER
I meant to do that.

REMBRANDT
Sure, Mighty Man!

He pulls up Joxer. They continue onwards.

EXT. ARES' TEMPLE COMPOUND - MAIN COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

Three guards charge, spears lowered.

Xena cartwheels over them, landing behind. She spins, sword SLASHING their spear shafts in half. They stumble, confused.

She grabs a fallen spear, HURLS it at a fourth guard. It pins his cloak to a wooden post. He flails, trapped.

A guard lunges from behind. Xena sidesteps, grabs his wrist, and TWISTS. He drops his sword, howling. She kicks him into a stack of crates, which COLLAPSE in a splintered heap.

The LOCAL WARLORD, roars from across the courtyard, raising a massive AX overhead. His eyes burn with rage.

LOCAL WARLORD
You'll pay for defying
Ares, Xena!

He charges, SCREAMING, ax swinging wildly. Xena ducks, the blade WHISTLING past her head, shaving a lock of her hair.

She rolls, snatching her chakram from her hip. With a flick, she HURLS it. The disc zings, ricocheting off a stone pillar, a shield, a helmet—KNOCKING OUT two guards and the Local Warlord in a chain reaction. It returns to her hand with a satisfying CLINK.

Two more guards rush her, swords drawn. She leaps, flips mid-air, and lands by the trebuchet.

She kicks a guard into the launch area and CHOPS the safety rope.

The arm SNAPS forward, rocketing the guard into the nearby woods, flailing. He PLOOFS through foliage, rustling leaves, lands with a muted THUD.

The second guard swings at her legs. Xena jumps, grabs the trebuchet's returning arm, and swings around it like a gymnast.

Her boots connect with his chest, sending him CRASHING into a water trough.

EXT. ARES' TEMPLE COMPOUND - EAST COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

Scaffolding looms in the central courtyard, piled with barrels, lumber, tools.

GABRIELLE, staff spinning like a storm, battles two GUARDS, swords spark against wood. Her eyes blaze, sweat gleams in morning light.

REMBRANDT dodges a guard's blade, dives behind a crate. He hurls a loose brick, strikes the guard's knee, he drops with a howl.

ARTURO lands a stiff punch with his sword handle to the chin of a hulking guard. The guard reels.

THREE CROSSBOWMEN aim at Arturo, Rembrandt and Gabrielle. They stop dead in their tracks.

JOXER, armor rattling, flees a snarling guard, in panic. He trips over a coiled rope, lurching toward the scaffolding's base with a yelp.

The rope snaps taut, topples a towering stone statue of Ares, spear aloft.

The Crossbowmen prepare to fire. Rembrandt, Gabrielle and Arturo wince, expecting to die.

The statue SLAMS into a scaffold leg with a CRASH. It shudders, wood cracks.

A pole WHIPS back, SMACKS the guard chasing Joxer. He rockets twenty feet, crumples unconscious in a dust cloud.

Barrels, lumber, and tools tumble from the scaffold in a roaring avalanche. The debris buries the Crossbowmen.

Gabrielle, Rembrandt, and Arturo drop low, dodging as the scaffold COLLAPSES with a thunderous BOOM, narrowly missing. Dust swirls in sunlight.

They rise, brush off dirt, eyes wide.

JOXER stumbles up, grins like a triumphant fool.

ARTURO
(to Gabrielle, Rembrandt)
That man is the embodiment of chaos theory.

EXT. ARES' TEMPLE COMPOUND - MAIN COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

A HORN BLARES. Reinforcements—TEN MORE GUARDS—pour into the courtyard from a side gate, crossbows loaded.

Xena smirks, undaunted. She sprints toward a low wall, vaulting over it as crossbow bolts THUD into the stone. She lands in a crouch, scanning the chaos.

XENA
(to herself)
Time to even the odds.

She spots a pile of oil jars near the temple steps. With a running start, she KICKS one, sending it rolling toward the advancing guards. Her chakram flies again, SPARKING off a metal brazier. The jar EXPLODES in a fiery burst, scattering the crossbowmen.

The Local Warlord recovers, yanking his ax from the dirt. He charges again, bellowing.

He swings, the ax carving a trench in the ground. Xena dodges, her movements fluid. She grabs a fallen shield, BLOCKS his next swing. The impact rattles her arms, but she holds firm.

She spins, delivering a ROUNDHOUSE KICK to his jaw. He staggers but swings again, wild and desperate.

Xena ducks, then vaults over him, landing behind. She slams the shield's edge into his back, sending him face-first into the dirt, unconscious.

A guard on a balcony above aims a crossbow. Xena hurls the shield like a discus. It SMASHES into his chest, knocking him over the railing into a pile of straw below.

The remaining guards hesitate, eyeing their fallen comrades. Xena stands tall, chakram in one hand, sword in the other, her gaze daring them to move.

XENA (CONT'D)
Anyone else wanna dance?

They drop their weapons and scatter, fleeing into the shadows.

Xena catches her breath, then sprints toward the temple's entrance.

INT. ARES' TEMPLE - MAIN CHAMBER

QUINN writhes under purple energy, WADE screaming, restrained.

WADE
Quinn!

The wall PROJECTION intensifies:

Quinn's SLIDING RIG

VORTEX tests

QUINN telling Arturo about crossing the Einstein-Rosen-Podolsky bridge

ARTURO yelling at Quinn for upstaging him in his classroom

CHALKBOARD EQUATION in Quinn's basement

SOLUTION — Angstrom symbol, "r" with "12" superscript, both underlined, infinity below.

SLIDERS and REMBRANDT'S CAR being sucked into the vortex

Ares pulls his hand away from Quinn, satisfied.

ARES
Journey's over.
Tell Hades I said "Hi".

Ares forms a fire ball in his hand to destroy Quinn.

WADE
NO!

FADE OUT

ACT FOUR

INT. ARES' TEMPLE - MAIN CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

As Ares is about to firebomb Quinn, XENA's WAR CRY erupts. She SOMERSAULTS in, kicking Ares away.

Quinn rolls off the altar, groaning.

Wade's restraints dissolve; she runs over to help him up.

XENA
All right Ares.
You're done tormenting
these people.

ARES
The fun's just started.

XENA and ARES clash, dodging punches and kicks with godlike speed for about a minute.

Xena forces Ares back toward a corner.

She ricochets the CHAKRAM in the tight space faster than a pinball between mushroom bumpers in a pinball machine, grazing Ares' armor.

He flinches, WTF expression.

Xena lands a SPINNING KICK, sending Ares crashing into weapon racks.

Swords, spears scatter.

She catches the chakram.

GABRIELLE, ARTURO, REMBRANDT, and JOXER rush in.

ARES (CONT'D)
(rising)
Congratulations Xena.
You saved them. But from
what I've seen, mortals
shouldn't travel between
worlds. Causes too much
trouble.

He fires an ENERGY BOLT at the TIMER.

Xena's CHAKRAM flies counterclockwise, skidding across the altar. It's silver glint flashes against the timer's glowing red digits.

The timer is launched upwards.

The bolt strikes. Ares snarls, thwarted by mortal steel.

ARTURO catches the timer as the chakram returns to Xena.

XENA
Your gadget's safe, Professor.

ARTURO
And your aim impeccable.

ARES
(dismissive)
Fine. Whatever. I got what I wanted.
(to Wade, sly smile)
Wade, my new warrior queen. If we meet again, the offer's still open.

He winks and vanishes. The group exhales.

Rembrandt helps steady Quinn.

REMBRANDT
You okay, Q-Ball?

QUINN
(groggy)
Bad hangover.

WADE
Professor, time?

ARTURO
(checks timer)
Thirty seconds.

REMBRANDT
At least that freak Ares is gone. Another bad apple on our trip.

WADE
(reflective)
He wasn't all bad.

QUINN
Wade, you weren't attracted to him, were you?

WADE
(nonchalant smiles, turns)
Hmmmmmt...

Wade walks over to the Professor.

Quinn's dumbstruck while Rembrandt grins.

Xena, Gabrielle exchange a smirking glance.

ARTURO
Here we go.

Arturo aims the timer at a wall. The VORTEX opens.

Xena, Gabrielle, and Joxer gape.

Flickering light, wind fills the room.

Rembrandt grips Joxer's hand.

REMBRANDT
Thanks for saving us, man. You made a brother for life.

He quickly hugs Joxer, claps him on the back.

REMBRANDT (CONT'D)
Remember those singing lessons.

JOXER
I will!

Rembrandt leaps in the vortex.

ARTURO
(to Xena and Gabrielle)
Ladies, my thanks.
(nods to Joxer)
And to you.

Arturo jumps in.

WADE
(to Xena, Gabrielle, Joxer)
Thank you so much.

Wade runs in, Greek dress flapping in the wind.

QUINN
(to Xena, Gabrielle, Joxer)
Thanks. We owe you.

XENA
Get home.

Quinn dives into the vortex. It snaps shut with a final shimmer. The chamber falls silent.

GABRIELLE
Will they get home?

XENA
Someday.

GABRIELLE
What did Ares get?

XENA
(grim)
We'll find out.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE HILL - DAY

ARES stands on a remote hill, arm outstretched, palm down. His hand turns up. A BLUE VORTEX opens.

ARES
(cocky)
Oh, yeah.

The vortex glows, his smirk triumphant.

FADE TO CREDITS.